

**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**April 16, 1998**

Projects Reviewed

Convened: 10:00 am

Rainier Community Center Play Area  
Lincoln Park Play Area  
Weller Street Bridge  
Community Initiated Park projects:  
    Greg Davis Park  
    Bradnor 'Gardens' Park  
    Taejon Park  
    Cedar Park  
    Pritchard Wetlands Restoration Project  
Transportation Strategic Plan

Adjourned: 4:00pm

Commissioners Present

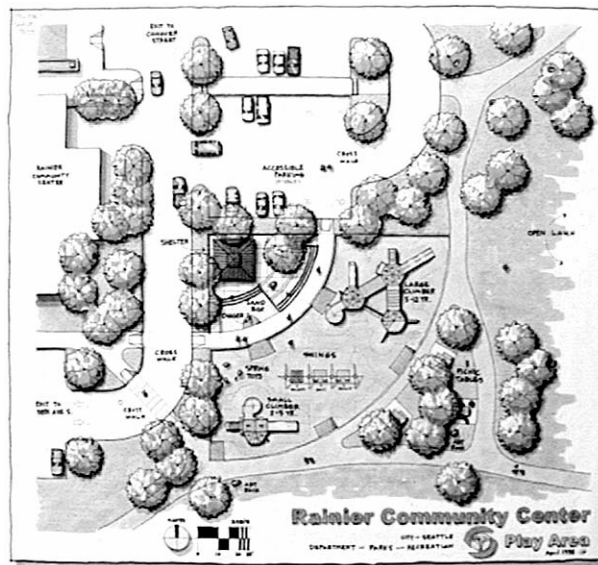
Gerald Hansmire  
Jon Layzer  
Rick Sundberg

Staff Present

Marcia Wagoner  
Peter Aylsworth  
Rebecca Walls

041698.1    Project: **Rainier Community Center Playground**  
                  Phase: Design Development  
                  Presenters: Eric Gold, Parks Department  
                  Robin Kordik, Parks Department  
                  Time: .5 hr. (0.3%)

The Rainier Community Center Playground is viewed as a destination play area because of its adjacency with the Community Center gymnasium. The budget for the project is \$370,000. At the previous presentation the Commission preferred the proposed option C-2. However, the limited community responses favored option B-1. The design has developed to incorporate aspects of each option. The program spaces include a plaza and shelter, a digging area or sandbox, a two-to-five year old play area, swings, a three-to-twelve year old area, and a picnic area. How the art rocks will be integrated in the design is still undecided. The plan shows one art rock in the plaza area as it exists on the site.



#### **Discussion:**

- Layzer:** The bollards that restrict vehicular access between the two parking lots are a good solution. They reinforce the pedestrian connection between the play area and the gymnasium.
- Gold:** There isn't a real need for through access between parking lots, so there shouldn't be any operational problems in restricting vehicle access.
- Layzer:** How high is the plaza level above the path?
- Gold:** It is 18 inches above the path. There will be three steps with six inch rise and 18 inch tread. That size of steps are easier for children to use and will also serve as seating. There will be two ADA accessible ramps at each side.
- Layzer:** What is the play area surface material?
- Gold:** The main play area will have engineered wood fiber with rubber ramps at primary access points. The small sandbox will have cleaned beach sand.
- Layzer:** Are you utilizing existing trees?
- Gold:** All of the trees are existing in other areas of the park and will be relocated as shown in the plan. The tree types are primarily Birch with some Pine trees.
- Kordik:** There is enough money in the budget to replace any trees that may be damaged in moving.

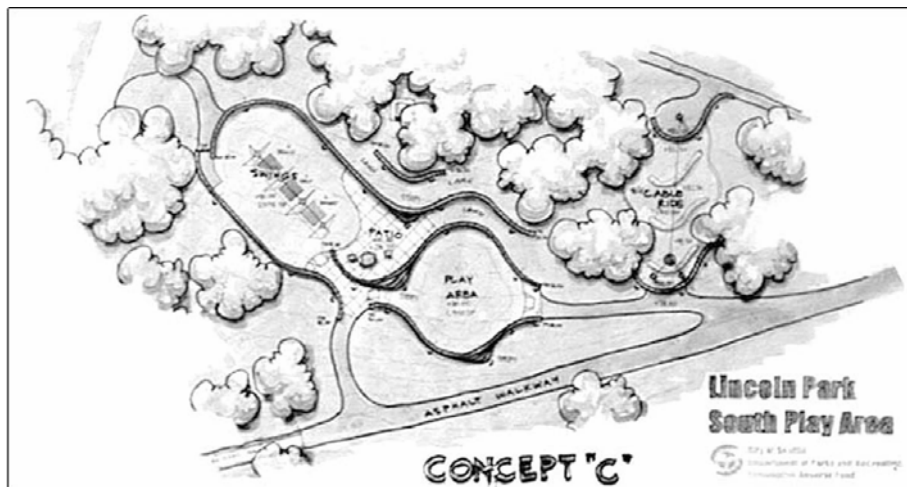
- Gold:** We want to provide as much shade and visual boundary as possible. Behind the Community Center security is an important issue. The lack of plants under the trees around the plaza structure will allow clear lines of site into the play area from the parking lot.
- Layzer:** Will there be lighting in the plaza shelter?
- Gold:** No. The only lighting will be from the area lights in the parking lot.
- Wagoner:** Will the shelter be used for children's programs?
- Gold:** It will primarily be used during the summer with daycamp programs and other child activities.
- Wagoner:** You should think about bringing power and lighting to the shelter.
- Kordik:** That is a good idea.
- Wagoner:** Are Birch trees shade trees?
- Gold:** They provide more of a filtered shade, than a dense shade.
- Wagoner:** You might consider putting one canopied shade tree in the picnic area.
- Gold:** There are some Plane and Maple trees in the area. We will consider how to incorporate that idea.
- Action:** **The Commission subcommittee recommends approval of the project as presented in Design Development and makes the following comments and recommendations:**
- **the design is a thoughtful integration of the community's desires with the previous Commission comments;**
  - **consider adding lighting to the plaza shelter;**
  - **incorporating a dense shade tree in the picnic area.**

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041698.2    Project: **Lincoln Park Play Area**  
                  Phase: Schematics  
                  Presenters: Eric Gold, Parks Department  
                                  Alice Poggi, Parks Department  
                  Time: .75 hr. (0.3%)

The new Lincoln Park play area is located at the south end of Lincoln Park in West Seattle. The existing south end play structure has been removed due to the deterioration of its wood structure. The new play area will be located further south in a clearing next to an existing path. This new site slopes down towards the water and offers more openness with filtered views of the sound. The project's total budget is \$310,000, with \$198,000 for construction.

The project layout is similar to the Mount Baker Park play area with organic forms and rough CMU retaining walls. Three conceptual designs were developed. The preferred conceptual design scaled back the amount of retaining wall, eliminated the two-to-five year old area, retained the cable ride, and added an informal toddler digging area. The play equipment will be limited to one major piece that will incorporate varied age groups and will be primarily made out of wood with powder-coated steel pieces.



**Discussion:**

**Layzer:** Are there site lines to the Comfort Station?

**Gold:** There is a path to the Comfort Station. The pine tree branches are high allowing good visibility.

**Layzer:** The new location seems to gain light, air, and access, but loses the close proximity to the Comfort Station.

**Poggi:** It also has better visibility from the parking lot.

**Layzer:** What will the retaining wall be made of?

**Gold:** They will be broken-face CMU blocks, a wide variety of colors and sizes, allowing a random appearance.

**Poggi:** The Parks Department still has to review the cable ride. There are different points of view and opinions about it within the Department.

**Layzer:** If the cable ride is removed from the scheme, do you have back-up plan?

**Gold:** If the cable ride is removed, then the play area will probably be enlarged and divided into areas for different age groups.

**Poggi:** We would also return to the public with changes to the layout. The community is very supportive of the cable ride and it will be difficult for them to let go of it. This design provides a playscape, not just play equipment, which the community strongly supports.

**Layzer:** How would a handicapped person access the central patio space?

**Gold:** The easiest access route would be through the main play area. We are also making the terraces of stabilizes soil, not technically ADA accessible, but firm enough to be used as access.

**Poggi:** The accessibility codes are based on access for self-propelled wheelchairs. However, most of the handicapped users are mobility impaired, but not in wheelchairs. The engineered soil terraces will be easily accessible to mobility impaired users.

**Sundberg:** This plan reminds me of the Mount Baker Park play area that gets an amazing amount of intense use.

**Gold:** That was also a community driven project.

**Poggi:** The Lincoln Park community has some residual money left over from the north end play area improvements. They want to apply that money to artwork in the new south end play area. There is a legend of a "Lincoln Park Serpent" that may serve

as a theme for the art project. They are thinking about cast bronze, but it is not yet resolved.

**Wagoner:** Cast bronze is an expensive choice. There are a variety of other castable materials that the community may want to look at. Many artists are currently working with casting colored concrete. The art could also be integrated into the sand digging area for the toddlers to play on. It could be a sculptural form that fits into the undulating terraces of the plan itself.

**Poggi:** The community may be working with the Cleveland High School Foundry.

**Layzer:** The walls themselves will become play areas for children as well as the play structures. Logs and rocks can also accent play structures.

**Gold:** We used logs and rocks at the Mount Baker Park play area. We may be able to incorporate them here also. We were also thinking about using granite stones to form a table and chairs.

**Wagoner:** What will happen to the old play area site?

**Gold:** There is a swing set there with sand beneath. The old equipment is gone and the existing swings will be removed. Then it will be left natural.

**Action:** **The Commission subcommittee recommends approval of the project as presented. The subcommittee enthusiastically supports the community involvement and the potential community art piece as part of the design. The subcommittee also supports the integration of the cable ride into the project.**

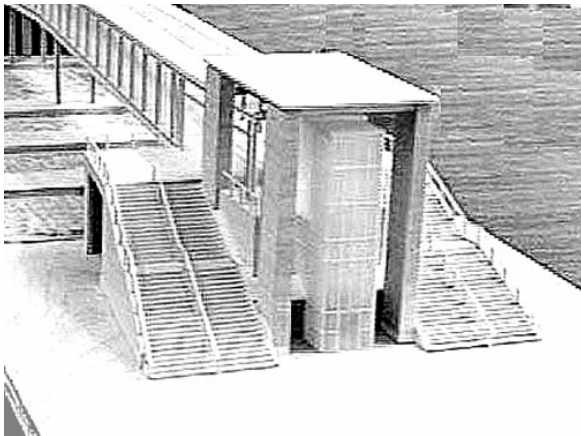
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041698.3    Project: **Weller Street Bridge**  
                  Phase: Design Development, (new direction)  
          Presenters: Steve Arai, Arai/Jackson Architects and Planners  
                          Joe Beck, Washington State Department of Transportation  
                          Rich Murakami, Arai/Jackson Architects and Planners  
          Attendees: Carol Pennie, KPFF Consulting Engineers  
                  Time: 1 hr. (hourly)

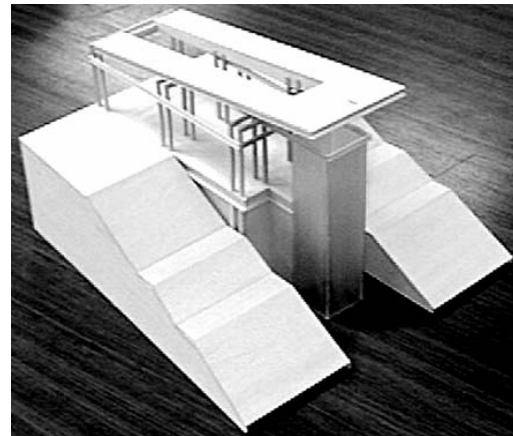
The Weller Street bridge project has undergone significant design changes in response to meetings with the Public Stadium Authority (PSA) and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The major changes are concentrated on the west end stair and elevator core. Previous issues regarding the design included security problems around the elevator core mass, bridge roof overhangs trapping train exhaust, RTA connections to the bridge, and the resolution of the bridge roof into the elevator core facade.

Subsequent designs had a lighter west end mass with brick pilasters similar to those on King Street Station. The west end was also widened to receive the bridge roof and the elevator was expressed as a vertical glass tower. The PSA and SHPO had concerns with the transparency and massing of the west end in this design, and thought the pilasters competed with King Street Station.

As a result of these concerns, the design team explored an even lighter solution. This latest scheme reduces the structure to a doubled steel column grid that continues across the bridge. The elevator core will be a vertical glass volume that terminates below the roof. The roof over the bridge is a very shallow gable with a central skylight along the ridge line. This gable roof connects to the side of a shed roof over the elevator, sloping up to the west. An additional landing has also been added to the stairs.



earlier brick pilaster design



latest design with steel frame

**Discussion:**

- Sundberg:** How will the gable roof of the bridge tie into the sloped end over the stairs?
- Murakami:** It will tie into the sloped roof like a dormer into the eave side of a gable roof.
- Layzer:** Have you found a use for the space under the landings?
- Murakami:** It will be used by City Light to house switches and electrical equipment as well as the elevator mechanical equipment. This requires truck access through that space with doors on each side.
- Sundberg:** I like the lighter scheme, but I am concerned about the sloped roof at the end. Have you explored just continuing the bridge gable roof through to the west end?
- Hansmire:** I also like the simplest solution.
- Murakami:** We looked at continuing the bridge roof, but were concerned about a lack of visual termination.
- Sundberg:** The glass elevator can become the terminus for the bridge. I like the rhythm of the doubled columns. I recommend further simplification of the west end roof.
- Layzer:** I also like the pilasters that related the bridge back to the King Street Station. Who was concerned about that relationship? How are these design changes effecting the arts program?
- Murakami:** Artist D'Agostino has been out of the country, and unavailable to discuss the changes. The panels of perforated steel along the bridge will not need to change. We plan to revisit their art design with the changes to the bridge design.
- Layzer:** The gates and screens don't seem affected, but the lanterns may be.
- Sundberg:** What will the elevator be enclosed with?
- Murakami:** It will be transparent glass with steel sashes. The elevator will probably be transparent also.
- Sundberg:** The elevator element seems to have great opportunities for development with lighting and artwork. I recommend that the roof be simplified and money be spent on developing the elevator piece as the bridge terminus.
- Hansmire:** I agree. I also recommend simplifying the roof design.
- Sundberg:** The elevator could become a strong beacon in the area.
- Layzer:** What is the schedule for making these design changes?
- Beck:** We have given Arai/Jackson an addition eight weeks to develop the changes.
- Action:** **The Commission subcommittee recommends approval of the project as presented in Design Development. The subcommittee strongly recommends**

**further simplification of the roof form over the west end elevator. The subcommittee makes the following comment and recommendations:**

- **develop the elevator tower as the terminating element, or beacon;**
- **identify and develop art and lighting opportunities for the elevator piece;**
- **re-evaluate the art program given the design changes.**

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041698.4      Project: **Commission Business**

**Action Items:**

All action and discussion items will be addressed by the full Commission at the May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Announcements:**

- B. SKAGIT VALLEY SITE VISIT - APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>
- C. GRAND OPENING OF NEW MILLER COMMUNITY CENTER: Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 to 4:00pm.
- D. SOUTH LAKE UNION PARK WORKSHOP: April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5:00 to 7:30 pm.
- E. CITY COUNCIL MUNICIPAL CENTER RESOLUTION AND RESPONSE: Wagoner reported.

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041698.5-9      Project: **Community Initiated Park projects: Greg Davis Park Bradnor 'Gardens' Park, Taejon Park, Cedar Park, Pritchard Wetlands Restoration Project**

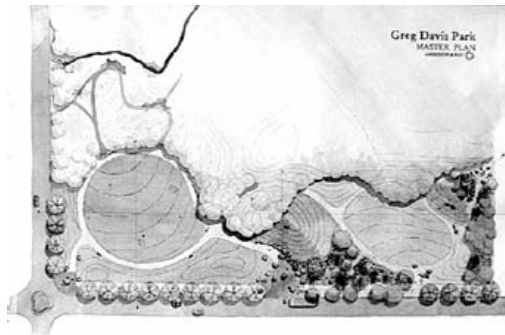
Phase: Briefing on Community Initiated Projects  
 Presenters: Mike Little, Project Manager, Greg Davis Park  
               Beth Purcell, Parks Department  
               Rebecca Sadinsky, Department of Neighborhoods  
 Time: 1.5 hr. (0.3%)

Community, or Neighborhood, Initiated Projects include restorations, wetlands, playgrounds, trails, garden/education, passive and active parks. City funding for these projects is limited primarily to Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) grants, state and federal grants, foundations, and other small grants. Given the number of projects and the limited amount of funding available, community involvement plays a major role in developing these projects. These projects can also benefit from involvement of the Department of Neighborhoods and Seattle Public Utilities. Future Neighborhood Initiated projects will be impacted by Neighborhood Plans, an increase in NMF grants, if passed by City Council, and the Gray to Green Initiative that attempts to convert school district parking lots and expanses of asphalt into low-maintenance landscapes.

**Greg Davis Park**

Greg Davis Park is located in West Seattle on the corner of 26<sup>th</sup> and Brandon. It was begun three years ago with funds left in a trust by Greg Davis for the development of the park. These funds have been used with the Neighborhood Matching Fund for a budget of \$200,000. Park elements include meadows, paths, a native plant garden, educational opportunities and a strong connection to Longfellow Creek. To date 5001 plants and trees have been placed and 500 more are planned. The site has been rough graded and the north area has been planted

and irrigated. Concrete curbs, a plaza, paths, and lawns are planned for construction this summer and fall.



### **Project Discussion:**

**Layzer:** When was the Master Plan completed?

**Little:** In the fall of 1996.

**Layzer:** Is it being followed closely?

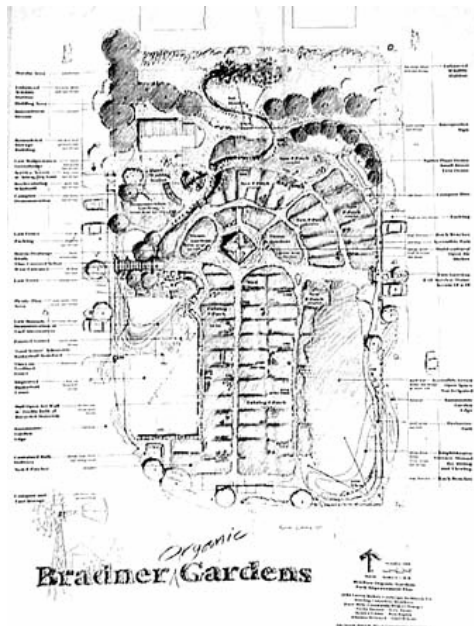
**Little:** Yes, with some additional elements.

**Purcell:** It has been completed in small piecemeal fashion so far and there is a growing desire to just finish the project.

**Little:** This Saturday we'll have approximately 100 volunteers at the site.

### **Bradnor 'Gardens' Park**

Bradnor Park is located southeast of I-90 in the South Atlantic Street Neighborhood. The park was divided into areas for various neighborhood uses. These include an accessible P-Patch for elderly disabled citizens, which is intended to be a tilth demonstration of sustainable plant growing opportunities. This project is currently moving into the construction document phase and will be constructed in the fall of 1999.



### **Cedar Park**



Cedar Park is a two acre site at the corner of 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and NE 135<sup>th</sup> Street. It is adjacent to an existing school building that has been leased out to a group of artists as an arts center. The two acre site is currently an abandoned asphalt parking lot that the community would like turned into a park. The Seattle Public Utilities recently moved a large amount of dirt to the site from the Meadowbrook pond. As mitigation for storing the dirt on the site, Seattle Public Utilities will do the grading and paving of the new park. The project will be funded by the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Phase one of the project will include site work within the next couple of months and the park should be completed in fall of 1998.

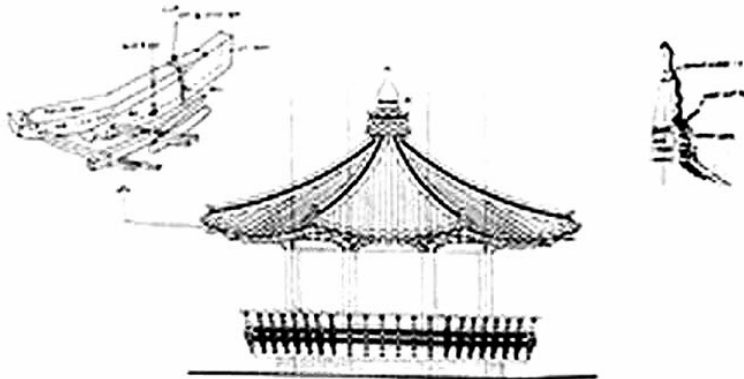


#### **Project Discussion:**

- Layzer:** Is there any design funding?
- Purcell:** There is some from the Neighborhood Matching Fund and other grants, and the community has raised the balance.
- Layzer:** Having the necessary resources for design is a major issue in getting projects off the ground.

#### **Taejon Park**

The Taejon Park is located on Sturgis Avenue South overlooking I-90. It is a long slender park separated from I-90 by a retaining wall. It is part of the Sister City Park program with Taejon, Korea. A gazebo structure will be built in Korea and shipped in pieces to the site. The community has applied for a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant to cover the cost of path, foundations, and other infrastructure.



#### **Project Discussion:**

- Wagoner:** What will happen to the project if it doesn't receive the grant? Will the structure be visible from the freeway, or only from the park?
- Purcell:** It may be visible in some places from I-90.
- Sadinsky:** The community residents like the project as an anti-vandalism element.

### **Pritchard Wetlands Restoration Project**

City Light has vacated the site and returned it to the Parks Department. The project was awarded a \$75,000 Neighborhood Matching Fund grant. A Parks Department staff person will help with technical issues, using some of these funds. Programmatic elements of the project include regrading and removing the fill, replacing the marshy areas and habitats, an alder grove, and a boardwalk for access. The project will also be used for educational purposes. The Parks Department is trying to get children involved early on in the process so that they can see the progressive development of the wetlands. The project should be completed in late summer or early fall of this year.

### **Discussion of community initiated projects:**

- Layzer:** These are fragile projects relying on community initiative, City resources, and City property. Therefore, they have a responsibility to make sure that the designs are well developed. This may be the biggest hurdle you face since most communities aren't open to spending the time and money necessary for good design.
- Sadinsky:** The initial \$5,000 for design work on the Pritchard Wetlands project has been increased to \$10,000. It is difficult to raise money for design and technical studies. The Small and Simple Fund offers \$10,000. Most projects are hindered by a lack of funding, not by a lack of community involvement.
- Wagoner:** Community groups have become more sophisticated over time. Design money upfront to ensure project feasibility and phased implementation is very important.
- Layzer:** These kinds of project require two or three motivated individuals.
- Purcell:** These projects do need leaders. There are some projects that no one wants to lead, therefore, they don't get developed. The Parks Department can help in that process.
- Sadinsky:** The Parks Department is also clearer now on the process involved in these projects. The public process has improved.
- Layzer:** Pushing the public meetings is important. People aren't typically interested in long-term projects.
- Sadinsky:** The Parks Department now has a better understanding of how a good finished product requires strong initial design. Communities usually want to jump in and start digging.
- Layzer:** The Design Commission needs to see these types of projects, though not at every step in the development.
- Sundberg:** These projects are real assets to the community.
- Wagoner:** The Commission should be seen as a source of experienced advice, not as a hindrance in the process.
- Purcell:** How would the Commission be funded for these reviews?
- Wagoner:** We are able to waive or reduce the review fees for Neighborhood Matching Fund projects, when necessary.
- Sadinsky:** At what stage would you like to see the projects?

- Hansmire:** Probably between the conceptual and schematic phases, when there are some alternatives and options to evaluate and discuss.
- Layzer:** Rainier Community Center Playground is an example of how early review and advice can be incorporated to improve the design.
- Purcell:** The Parks Department will also have internal reviews of the projects to give technical information and advise.
- Sadinsky:** The designers are typically asked to do a lot on these projects; would it be valuable for them to come to the Commission reviews as well?
- Layzer:** I think so.
- Hansmire:** It may depend on the size of the project. I don't think that the Commission wants to be the design police for small projects. Community representatives are probably sufficient for presenting small projects.
- Sadinsky:** Do you also review school projects?
- Wagoner:** Only if City money or land is involved.
- Purcell:** Schools generally have their own review process.
- Wagoner:** The Commission can lend support to community developed ideas in pursuit of better designs.
- Layzer:** Given the limited design budgets, there probably isn't enough funding for designers to seek diverse professional expertise.
- Walls:** Perhaps sharing information between community projects in close proximity would help.
- Wagoner:** These projects often attract young designers with less experience. Examples of successful projects in regards to the design, process, and implementation would be helpful.
- Purcell:** Despite some unresolved maintenance issues, there haven't been too many past failures in park design.
- Wagoner:** It is unfortunate that there isn't time to evaluate past examples to see what worked well.
- Sadinsky:** When we know which projects are most likely to proceed, we will let you know.
- Layzer:** We should get the project descriptions and contractual documents so that we can evaluate which ones would be best served by Commission review.
- Purcell:** It would also be helpful to have Parks Department staff at the meetings to bring information directly back to the Department.
- Layzer:** The Parks Department seems better equipped to deal with these community projects than in years past.
- Action:** **The Commission subcommittee appreciates being informed about the development of community initiated park projects and makes the following comments and recommendations:**
- **initial design funding is essential to ensure project feasibility and phased implementation;**
  - **maintaining public enthusiasm throughout the project's development is important;**
  - **the design team is encouraged to use the Commission as a source of professional expertise in evaluating conceptual and schematic design alternatives;**
  - **the City should evaluate past community initiated projects in search of successfully designed and implemented projects that could serve as examples;**

- **these examples should be made available to communities for use in developing new projects.**

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041698.10    Project: **Transportation Strategic Plan**  
                  Phase: Briefing  
                  Presenters: Jim Dare, Seattle Transportation  
                                  Aaron Ostrom, Strategic Planning Office  
                                  MaryCatherine Snyder, Strategic Planning Office  
                  Attendees: Marty Curry, Seattle Planning Commission  
                                  Maria Gonzalez, Seattle Planning Commission  
                                  Kristine Hill, Seattle Planning Commission  
                                  Kenichi Nakano, Seattle Planning Commission  
                                  Mel Streeter, Seattle Planning Commission  
                                  Roger Wagoner, Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Time: 1 hr. (N/C)

The purpose of the Draft Transportation Strategic Plan (DTSP) is to set up transportation goals for the City's future. The plan includes a set of actions that may help solve current transportation problems. Due to the lack of transportation funding, the emphasis is on the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing transportation systems. Maintenance and repair is typically more cost effective than new construction. Current maintenance issues include surface deterioration (i.e. potholes) and structural deterioration (i.e. bridges and retaining walls). Maintaining existing transportation systems requires an estimated budget of approximately \$62 million per year, but the allocated budget is only \$35 million per year. The DTSP establishes which repairs are the most important, recognizing that some new improvements will be required. The plan focuses on moving people in ways other than Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV's). Recommended pedestrian improvements include adding sidewalks to the 100 miles of arterial currently without sidewalks, and adding crosswalks for increased safety. Recommended bicycle improvements include completing the City's urban trails network, focusing on missing links and obstacles. Recommended transit improvements include signal light preemption, bus bulbs to keep buses in the flow of traffic.

The plan has not yet been approved by City Council and the public comment period for the DTSP will conclude on May 31. Copies of the plan are available through the Seattle Transportation web page.

**Action:    The Design Commission subcommittee and members of the Planning Commission made the following comments and recommendations regarding City policy issues and plan implementation issues:**

***City Policy Issues***

- **further development of this plan must be coordinated with other planning efforts within the City;**
- **clearly define what "key pedestrian streets" are and what their classifications mean. This should be done in conjunction with neighborhood planning groups and the definitions must be consistent throughout City departments;**
- **address the lack of connection between the transportation goals and land-use and zoning policies;**

- the City should have a long-term vision for improvements, aggressively pursuing the funding that would cover future projects as well as current improvement projects;

*Plan Development and Implementation Issues*

- the City should take an aggressive, proactive approach in dealing with the RTA's station area development to ensure that current transit services are redistributed within the City;
- the plan must be developed in conjunction with Neighborhood Plans to eliminate future conflicts;
- the plan should raise public awareness of the behavioral issues behind current transportation problems by including information, previously removed from the plan, regarding the amount of private investment in the automobile and nature of automotive uses;
- utilize the media as an educational tool to raise public awareness of transportation issues and the use of SOV's